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**Children & Family Services  
Committee**

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**HB 3115**

**Brief Description:** Establishing a foster parent critical support and retention program.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Darneille, Talcott, Morrell, Green, McDonald, Ormsby, Simpson and Roberts.

<p><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creates a foster parent critical support and retention program.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 2/1/06

**Staff:** Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

**Background:**

Washington's child welfare system includes a program for foster parent pre-service training as well as a program for recruitment of foster parents. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is responsible for recruiting an adequate number of prospective foster and adoptive homes, including both regular and specialized homes. In 1990, the Legislature directed the DSHS to develop and implement a project to recruit more foster homes and adoptive homes for special needs children. Within each of the state's six regions, the DSHS must contact with one or more licensed foster care or adoption agencies to enhance the efforts of the DSHS.

In addition to efforts by the DSHS, various other entities strive to provide support for foster parents. Support efforts include foster parent crisis support hotlines, low-cost or no-cost training opportunities and workshops, monthly newsletters, and local foster parent support groups.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Division of Children and Family Services within the DSHS is directed to establish a critical support and retention program for foster parents who care for children who act out sexually, are physically assaultive, or who have other high-risk behaviors. The program will be implemented under the Division's contract and supervision area. Contractors must demonstrate experience providing in-home case management to foster homes licensed through the Division.

The program must include:

- 1.) 24-hour emergency assistance seven days a week;
- 2.) assessment of risk and development of a safety and supervision plan;

- 3.) home-based foster parent training utilizing evidence-based models;
- 4.) ongoing support groups; and
- 5.) referral to community services.

**Appropriation:** \$275,000 is appropriated from the State General Fund.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on 1/23/06.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.